

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION**

IN RE:

**MOUNTAIN EXPRESS OIL COMPANY,
et al.
DEBTORS.**

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**CASE NO.: 23-90147
(JOINTLY ADMINISTERED)

CHAPTER 7**

**FIFTH MONTHLY FEE STATEMENT OF HUGHES WATTERS ASKANASE, LLP
FOR ALLOWANCE OF COMPENSATION FOR SERVICES RENDERED AS
COUNSEL TO JANET S. NORTHRUP, CHAPTER 7 TRUSTEE, FOR THE PERIOD OF
JANUARY 1, 2024 THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2024**

[Related to Docket No. 1607]

Name of Applicant:	Hughes Watters Askanase, LLP	
Applicant's Role in Case:	Counsel for Chapter 7 Trustee	
Date Order of Employment Signed:	October 30, 2023, effective August 24, 2023 [Docket No. 1605]	
	Beginning of Period	End of Period
Time period covered by this Statement:	January 1, 2024	January 31, 2024
Total amounts awarded in all prior statements:	\$305,419.30	
Total professional fees requested in this Statement:	\$112,455.00	
20% holdback of professional fees in this Statement:	\$22,491.00	
Reimbursable expenses sought in this Statement:	\$654.46	
Total professional fees and expenses requested in this Statement (exclusive of holdback amount):	\$90,618.46	
Total actual professional hours covered by this Statement:	166.40	
Average hourly rate for professionals:	\$675.81	

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE *ORDER ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR INTERIM COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES FOR PROFESSIONALS AND TRUSTEE* [DKT. NO. 1607], EACH PARTY IN INTEREST RECEIVING NOTICE OF THE MONTHLY FEE STATEMENT WILL HAVE UNTIL 5:00 P.M. (CENTRAL TIME), TEN (10) DAYS AFTER SERVICE OF THE MONTHLY FEE STATEMENT TO OBJECT TO THE REQUESTED FEES AND EXPENSES. UPON THE EXPIRATION OF SUCH TEN (10) DAY PERIOD, THE TRUSTEE IS AUTHORIZED TO PAY THE PROFESSIONAL AN AMOUNT OF 80% OF THE FEES AND 100% OF THE EXPENSES REQUESTED IN THE APPLICABLE MONTHLY FEE STATEMENT.

Hughes Watters Askanase, LLP (“HWA”), counsel for Janet S. Northrup (the “Trustee”) the chapter 7 trustee for the estates of Mountain Express Oil Company, *et al*, hereby submits its *Fifth Monthly Fee Statement of Hughes Watters Askanase, LLP for Allowance of Compensation for Services Rendered as Counsel to Janet S. Northrup, Chapter 7 Trustee, for the Period of January 1, 2024 through January 31, 2024* (the “Fee Statement”), which covers the period from January 1, 2024 through and including January 31, 2024 (the “Fee Period”) filed pursuant to the *Order Establishing Procedures for Interim Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses for Professionals and Trustee* [Docket No. 1607] (the “Interim Compensation Order”). HWA requests compensation for actual, reasonable, and necessary professional services rendered in the amount of \$112,455.00 (the “Fees”), and for reimbursement of actual, reasonable, and necessary out-of-pocket expenses and costs incurred in the amount of \$654.46 (the “Expenses”), during the Fee Period. Eighty percent (80%) of the Fees equals \$89,964.00, and one hundred percent (100%) of the Expenses equals \$654.46 for a total requested amount of \$90,618.46. HWA seeks allowance of compensation for services rendered and reimbursement of expenses incurred solely in connection with work performed on behalf of the Trustee.

HWA’s monthly detailed billing entries for the Fee Period are attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, which includes a schedule of professionals who rendered services during the Fee Period, including each professional’s billing rate. The attached billing entries detail the time spent by each professional and the activity for which the time was expended and calculations for the Fees by project category. Further, HWA maintains records of all actual and necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred in connection with the rendition of professional services. A schedule of the expenses incurred in connection with HWA’s rendition of professional services to the Chapter 7 Trustee, including a description of each expense, is included on the attached **Exhibit A**.

Notice of the Fee Statement has been provided to the Trustee, the United States Trustee, the Debtor, all parties entitled to receive notice via the Court's CM/ECF system, and all parties listed on the Service List referenced in the accompanying certificate of service. In light of the nature of the relief requested herein, HWA submits that no further notice is required. Pursuant to the Interim Compensation Order, the parties receiving notice of this Fee Statement have until the tenth (10th) day following the filing of this Fee Statement to object to the requested Fees and Expenses. Pursuant to the Interim Compensation Order, and pending the expiration of the objection deadline, if no objection to the Fee Statement is received, the Trustee is authorized and directed to immediately pay to HWA the amount of \$90,618.46 which is equal to the sum of 80% of the Fees and 100% of the Expenses incurred by HWA during the Fee Period.

WHEREFORE, HWA, in connection with services rendered on behalf of the Trustee, respectfully requests (a) allowance of compensation and reimbursement in the amount of (i) \$89,964.00 for reasonable and necessary professional services rendered (80% of \$112,455.00) and (ii) \$654.46 for 100% of actual and necessary costs and expenses incurred during the Fee Period and (b) payment of the forgoing sums.

Dated: March 18, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Heather Heath McIntyre

Wayne Kitchens TBN: 11541110

wkitchens@hwa.com

Heather McIntyre TBN: 24041076

hmcintyre@hwa.com

Hughes Watters Askanase, LLP

1201 Louisiana, 28th Floor

Houston, Texas 77002

Telephone: (713) 759-0818

Facsimile: (713) 759-6834

**ATTORNEYS FOR JANET S. NORTHRUP,
CHAPTER 7 TRUSTEE**

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

On March 18, 2024, I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been served on parties entitled to receive CM/ECF notice via the Court's CM/ECF system in the above-referenced case and on the parties listed on the attached Master Service List via first-class, U.S. Mail, postage-prepaid to the extent not sent via CM/ECF.

/s/ Heather Heath McIntyre

Heather Heath McIntyre